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COCOM Document No. 3413.05/4

Date: September 28, 1959

COORDINATING COMMITTEE

MEMORANDUM FROM THE UNITED STATES DELEGATION

concerning

ROLLING MILLS - Item 1305

The United States has for some time been reviewing the problem presented by Item 1305 - rolling mills - not only in light of the difficulties surrounding past COCOM and CG consideration of this item but also in light of the recent proposal of the United Kingdom Delegation that Item 1305 be deleted. The United States Delegate is fully aware that the 1958 agreement on this item involved substantial compromise on the part of some other participating countries. Other participating countries are fully aware that the 1958 agreement also involved a substantial compromise by the United States. The basic United States appraisal of the strategic significance of rolling mills to the Sino-Soviet Bloc has not changed materially since 1958.

The United States does not favor the United Kingdom proposal for deletion of Item 1305 and does not concur in the United Kingdom's supporting rationale. Nevertheless, despite its own overall strategic evaluation of rolling mills, the United States has felt in preparing for this review the need to find a strategic rationale and to devise a definition of rolling mills which might, under a reasonable interpretation of the criteria, attract the continuing support of all member governments. In the development of the definition which has already been presented to COCOM (COCOM Document No. 3413.05/3) the United States has endeavored to meet this need.

The proposed redefinition frees from control, or does not re-control, rolling mills which may reasonably be viewed as of wide application in the rolling of commercial products - regardless of their importance in rolling direct and indirect military products. It attempts to embargo rolling mills of selected types and characteristics which

(1) are designed or re-designed primarily to roll products to meet military specifications - specifications which exceed those needed for commercial products,

(2) are needed primarily for products required by the military and in the presence of large military programs of advanced weapons systems will normally be used primarily in support of such programs,

(3) are not essential to the production of commercial products, or

(4) contain now or will contain advanced extractable technology of importance to the production of military type products.

Thus, the United States definition rests largely on the application of COCOM criteria (a) and/or (b).

A brief analysis of the proposed re-definition and its relationship to the present definition follows:

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Part A 1 - "having the work rolls supported by multiple back-up rolls or bearings" is identical with the present 1305(a). The majority of mills in Item A 1 are more commonly known as the "cold Sendzimer type". Of the total rolling mill commercial production capacity of any country Part A 1 represents a very small fraction. Nevertheless, this item makes a significant contribution to the requirements for military products, and for this reason the United States feels it necessary to maintain an embargo.

The contribution of the multiple back-up roll type in the military field consists primarily of its ability to roll very hard, high strength, thin strip and foil of titanium; precipitation hardenable semi-austenitic and austenitic stainless steels, cold rolled austenitic stainless steels, very thin (under 0.003") silicon steels for electronic equipment, niobium, molybdenum, and other refractory metals and alloys. The above materials rolled on multiple back-up roll mills are employed extensively in the military for jet and rocket engines; after burners; boosters, honeycomb and the covering skin for honeycomb, missile skins, and other missile hardware.

Part A 2 - "taper mills" - are those mills designed with special taper rolling provisions and devices for the production of tapered products for military use. The current mills in the United States are utilized for the rolling of tapered aluminum alloy flat-rolled products for such current United States military aircraft types as the B-47, B-52 and short wing fighter types.

Part A 3 - covers those types of mills incorporating features originating from military requirements and limited to technological advances of the last few years and those contemplated in the near future.

Part A 3 - excludes all mills embargoed under 1305(c) which were in operation prior to January 1, 1956. These are the large commercial production types such as the 5-stand tandem continuous sheet mill for tin-plate and automobile sheet. The mills now covered by 1305(b) are basically excluded from the proposed re-definition. However, the more recent ones can be interpreted as covered by Part A 3 of the proposed re-definition. The United States proposes that the question of such inclusion be further explored among technicians to clarify certain technical aspects which may be controlling as to the appropriateness of including certain types.

There are very few existing hot mills with the specified controls in operation. Several such hot mills are now being built and undoubtedly others will follow. The primary reason for this development is to produce the exceptionally close tolerances now required by the military.

Part A 3 will also include a very narrow range of the continuous cold mills now embargoed and also a narrow range of single stand cold mills not previously embargoed which are characterized primarily by their high accuracy.

Items (I), (II) and (III) of Part A 3 are specific aspects of rolling mill developments which are now in existence, are being improved upon, or are under development for the specific purpose of achieving greater accuracy in the various tolerances necessary for present and anticipated flat products for military use. Item (IV) relates to other developments which will achieve the necessary flatness characteristics, including gauge accuracy, required for the same purposes.

Part B of the re-definition covers any type of rolling mill designed (or re-designed) for the rolling of refractory metals and/or refractory alloys. These are understood to cover metals and their base-alloys whose characteristics permit use at metal temperatures of 2,000° F or above such as molybdenum, niobium, tantalum and tungsten. Programs to accomplish satisfactory rolling of such metals or alloys have been underway

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for some years sponsored by the United States Department of Defense on a priority basis to develop products which will withstand the high operating temperatures envisaged for new weapons systems. The United States is currently faced with rolling problems in this metallic area which have not yet been solved, and additional problems are clearly foreseen.

Part C of the re-definition covers specialized controls, specialized parts and specialized accessories for the mills described in Parts A and B. The specialized parts should properly be covered by Administrative Principle 4, (Annex A to Doc 3300, 2nd Revision) but because the controls and accessories are also important and are not covered by Administrative Principle 4, it was believed simpler to retain "parts" in Part C of the definition.

Since for rolling mills the technical aspects covered by Administrative Principle 5 (Annex A to Doc 3300, 2nd Revision) are highly important to effective control of rolling mills and their use, particular attention is called to this aspect of implementation.

The above definition thus attempts to release control of rolling mills needed for production of commercial products. In return it would retain or achieve control of recent types of mills, certain mills now under development and those mills with special characteristics of particular importance for rolling products for military use. It represents a studied effort on the part of the United States to meet certain interests and strongly held views of some other member governments while controlling mills of high significance to present and anticipated military needs. Like other COCOM definitions, the proposed re-definition is not perfect. It does, however, in the United States view represent a reasonable and relatively satisfactory resolution of a problem which has been difficult and trying for all governments concerned.

It is the hope of the United States Delegation and the United States Government that other member governments will recognize the major steps which the United States has taken in attempting to resolve this major issue and will find the United States rationale and definition acceptable.

The United States Delegation and its technical advisors are willing to explain further the proposed definition and supporting rationale and to answer any question which may arise. Similarly, any improvement in the definition which others may wish to suggest will be given prompt and open-minded consideration.